

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice-Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Mary Walsh, (arrived at 6:10 p.m.); Mark Rafanelli, and Robert Bollengier. Chairperson Susan DeSack and Member Valerie Zuercher were absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar and Director of Administration Robert V. Ross were present. Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar was absent.

ORDER – Vice-Chair Cicero called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Clerk Coutcher read the District Mission Statement.

Moment of Silence – In Memory of Superintendent John Eldridge – Vice Chair Cicero said that it has come to the School Committees' attention that former Superintendent John Eldridge passed away at the beginning of June. Mr. Eldridge served as superintendent from 1960 to 1990. The gymnasium in the high school and EWG's National Honor Society Chapter are named in his honor. During his tenure, Mr. Eldridge oversaw the construction of Metcalf Elementary School and

he was a great supporter of the students and teachers in Exeter-West Greenwich. Vice Chair Cicero called for a moment of silence in memory of former Superintendent John Eldridge.

Open Forum – None

Presentation – Meet the New Jr. High School Principal – Vice Chair Cicero reported that the district has a new principal at the junior high school. The School Committee voted to hire Mary Smith at a Special Meeting on August 3. Principal Smith is here tonight to meet and greet the School Committee. Superintendent Geismar introduced Principal Smith and said that she began working this week. Principal Smith comes to EWG from her previous position as Assistant Principal at the School for the Deaf. She comes to EWG with great enthusiasm and a strong record of accomplishment for working well with faculty to continuously improve instruction and for maintaining a positive learning environment.

Member Walsh arrived at this time, (6:10 p.m.).

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member Walsh made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Member Bollengier seconded the motion. Voted 5 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 2

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of July 20, 2010; Special Meeting Minutes of August 3, 2010

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

5. Non-Renewals

6. Recalls

7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$64,785.59: Accruals in the amount of 14, 117.07

D. Home School Approvals

1. FONTAINE – Noah and Alex

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – (1) July 19, 2010 letter from David D’Agostino of Gorham & Gorham Regarding Pawtucket School Committee vs. EWG School Committee, et al. – Case No.: A.A. 10-3535; (2) August 10, 2010

Memorandum from Superintendent Geismar to School Committee Regarding Vaccination Dates and Times Update

Year-End Budget Projection 2009 – 2010 – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported a projected July 1, 2010 General Fund Balance of approximately \$191,000. He advised that one more accrual is pending for copy costs that may erode that balance to as low as \$175,000 to \$160,000. In response to Member Bollengier's request for clarification, Mr. Ross explained how his Year-End Budget Projection ties into the District Treasurer's Budget Summary. Mr. Ross said he and Mrs. Ruizzo are working to coordinate the reports to report more clearly. Member Bollengier recommended tuning both reports prior to bringing them to the School Committee or to provide a supplemental schedule to explain the reports. Mr. Ross clarified that the \$191,175 balance reflects a \$488,923 expense balance and a \$335,974 loss in revenue. The District Treasurer's report is not actually a budget summary because there are no revenues reported on. It reports only on changes in expenses. Mr. Ross said if it is the Committees' wish, he could bring forward a budget subcommittee to meet prior to School Committee meetings. Vice Chair Cicero agreed with Member Bollengier that there is too big of a gap between the Budget Projection and the Budget Summary. Superintendent Geismar said he looks at the reporting as what the district will save on its expenses. He said the revenue is separate from that. In response to Vice Chair Cicero's comment that the public is asking how at this time the district is at \$191,000.00, Mr. Ross said that the district did

not lose as much state aid as had been anticipated. The district was anticipating a \$641,000 state aid cut. However, the state only cut \$585,000. Additionally, Medicaid came in over budget. Nevertheless, Mr. Ross said he is confident that under a different administration at the

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 3

Federal level, the Medicaid Reimbursements could have been less. Mr. Ross reported that the \$153,000 windfall under Miscellaneous is because the district did better on health insurance. The district revenue was not as bad as earlier projected but it still had a loss of \$335,975 in revenue.

Monthly Status Reports – Superintendent – Vice Chair Cicero asked why Vaccination Clinics for Lineham and Wawaloam students are taking place at the high school. Superintendent Geismar explained that The Wellness Group is guiding the clinics. Vice Chair Cicero expressed her opinion that it would be much better for those children if the clinics take place in their comfort zone. It will be more frightening for them to go to the high school. Dr. Geismar said he would check with the group to see if the clinic location can be switched.

Clerk Coutcher requested to add the charter amendments that were approved to the next regular meeting agenda. Vice Chair Cicero

agreed and asked whether the amendments need to go to the legislature. Superintendent Geismar said that he would check with Attorney Brad Gorham tomorrow.

Business

Special Education

Maintenance

Technology

NEW BUSINESS –Jr. High Athletics – Vice Chair Cicero asked the Superintendent to present his ideas and suggestions to bring junior high school sports back. Vice Chair Cicero said that she strongly supports bringing sports back to the junior high if the district can find a way to do so. Dr. Geismar reminded members that at the last School Committee meeting, Ted Borges brought a proposal forward on behalf of EWG Youth Soccer to fundraise to support junior high soccer. He said it was a wonderful thought Mr. Borges brought to help run the program. However, the school district and the School Committee have to run the program and cannot allow an outside organization to hire personnel. Nevertheless, the district can accept fundraising to defray the costs. He added that the district cannot participate in a pay to play program. Dr. Geismar recommended that the School Committee consider allocating funds for Junior High Athletics from the year-end balance to be supplemented by any funds raised by EWG Youth Soccer, Project Give Back, and/or any other organization that may contribute.

Each member expressed support to allocate funds for JH Athletics. Member Rafanelli cautioned that fundraising should be coordinated among all groups. Member Walsh said that she would like to see funding for Arts and Music as well. Member Bollengier expressed concern that at the last District Financial Meeting, this specific item was brought forward and voters voted it down. Member Rafanelli said his interpretation at the DFM was voters voiced concern that if the \$56,000 was approved, it was not a line

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 4

item so there was no guarantee the money would be used to fund JH Athletics. Member Bollengier expressed concern with taking the funds from the surplus balance in the event that other issue(s) may arise. Mr. Borges offered to work with the School Committee. Member Bollengier and Vice Chair Cicero debated whether the School Committee needed to vote on this matter. Vice Chair Cicero called for a vote.

Clerk Coutcher made a motion to allocate \$56,000 of the cash reserve surplus to the Junior High Sports line item. Member Rafanelli seconded the motion.

Members discussed whether the funds should be taken out of the surplus fund balance. Member Bollengier said that he would be more

comfortable if Clerk Coutcher would modify his motion without funds coming from the surplus.

Clerk Coutcher withdrew his motion.

Clerk Couther made a motion to restore the Junior High Sports line item for \$56,000. Member Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted 5 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Policies – Review and Adoption - #8509: Substance Abuse – Amendment – Member Bollengier explained that this is an amendment to an existing policy. Therefore, the committee can vote to amend the policy tonight.

Member Bollengier moved to approve policy 8509 as presented to the committee tonight. Member Rafanelli seconded the motion.

Member Walsh pointed out spelling errors. Member Bollengier told members that Principal Butler has assured him there will not be individual sniffing. Member Rafanelli pointed out that this is a policy to deterrent and to let students know that drugs will not be tolerated. It is not to find drugs. It is to deterrent. Member Bollengier agreed that it is intended to be a deterrent, however, if drugs are found, Policy #8506 kicks in and there are severe repercussions if a student is caught.

Voted 5 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Member Bollengier clarified the motion is to approve as revised with spelling corrections.

Approve Dependent Coverage until Age 26 – Director of Administration Robert Ross informed the School Committee that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) now covers dependents on their parent's healthcare until age 26. Additionally, those dependents that would be eligible but not enrolled can become enrolled on October 1, 2010 at a special meeting or wait until the plan's open enrollment. EWG's open enrollment occurs in July and September. This means those individuals would have to

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 5

wait until July 2011, or September 2011 to enroll in the plan. Mr. Ross advised that providing a special enrollment for subscribers in October 2010 increases the risk to claims by nine months for the district. Mr. Ross asked for guidance from the committee as to how it wishes to proceed. He advised that many districts are opting for the July 1, 2011 enrollment. A discussion ensued and members exchanged views, and asked clarifying questions. Consensus of the committee was to continue this item to the next regular meeting agenda to allow absent members DeSack and Zuercher the opportunity to voice their opinions concerning this

matter.

Approve Sports Turf Specialty for Field Maintenance – Director of Administration Robert Ross told the School Committee that Sports Turf Specialties (STS) is the company that prepared and installed the sod on the new athletic field and has worked closely with EWG Sports 4 Kids, (EWGS4K) to get the field to its current state. EWGS4K has requested that the district continue with STSD to ensure the field receives the proper care. Mr. Ross explained that under purchasing policy 3802, the district is required to seek three quotes from vendors. Member Bollengier voiced his opinion that the district cannot bypass the process of bidding this job, however, Policy 3802 states that the School Committee does not have to select the lowest bidder.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Policies Review/Adoption - #8708: Suicide Awareness – Adoption – Vice Chair Cicero advised that the concerns Member Zuercher brought forward at the last meeting concerning this policy were addressed and she is in agreement with this document. Dr. Geismar said he reviewed this policy with the principals today and he will review it with the entire staff as well.

Member Bollengier made a motion to adopt Policy 8708: Suicide Awareness. Member Walsh seconded the motion. Voted 5 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Sr. Project Steering Committee – Vice Chair Cicero said the steering committee has not met and there is nothing new to report at this time.

Dr. Geismar advised that Principal Butler has submitted the recommended changes to the Rhode Island Department of Education.

Capital Project Update – Superintendent Geismar reported that the Building Committee and the architect are working with the contractor to try to resolve differences of opinions over change orders and credits. This is an ongoing process. Secondly, with regard to the Metcalf water system project, which now the School Committee has taken on; the design plans are at the RI Department of Health and have been there for over one week. Architect Luis Torrado reported late this afternoon that although he has not yet heard from RIDOH, he expects to hear from them tomorrow. Dr. Geismar said that in the meantime, Senator Frank Maher will help facilitate RIDOH to approve the plans. Superintendent Geismar said there is a six to eight week lead-time to get the new tank fabricated to fit. The company awarded the bid is Calson. Calson has been looking at

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 10, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 6

installation. The temporary system is running. Calson sent Mr. Torrado a letter and gave three propositions to get the job done.

1. Take the tank out now, dig up, put back, and dig up again. This will add \$15,000 to the cost. (Mr. Torrado cautioned the superintendent

not to take the additional costs figures seriously.)

2. Wait until the tank arrives and then work all weekend to complete the project. This will add \$10,000 to the cost.

3. Do all the work during school time. Hire security and alter the entranceway to ensure safety. This will add \$5,000 to the cost.

Dr. Geismar said that Mr. Torrado advised that the School Committee does not need to decide tonight. This is the latest update. Dr. Geismar voiced his personal opinion that he would be in favor of option 2 - doing the project over the weekend. Dr. Geismar said he will bring this matter back to the School Committee and will continue to update the committee.

Member Rafanelli said he is in favor of avoiding this work during the school day, as it will be a distraction and a safety issue for students. Member Bollengier said he is not in favor of doing this work while school is in session. He is more in favor of doing it when the school is closed and is off limits.

Reports/Comments – None

Important Dates and Meetings – Tuesday, August 24, 2010 – School Committee Meeting; Friday, August 27, 2010-new Staff Training: Monday, August 30, 2010-teacher Orientation: Tuesday, August 31, 2010-First Day of School K - 12

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – None

Adjournment - Member Bollengier moved to adjourn. Member Walsh seconded the motion. Voted 5 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK